

**October 2022**

## **A Note from Your People's Counsel Sandra Mattavous-Frye**

### **What's New on the OPC Web?**

OPC uses various vehicles to inform utility consumers about our services and how we carry out our mission to advocate, educate, and protect. They include, sharing information at community meetings, distributing educational materials, and posting on social media. The OPC website also is a go-to place to learn what we do. So, I am excited to invite you to check out the new OPC website!



The address is the same: [opc-dc.gov](https://opc-dc.gov). However, we've executed a reboot of the site and we hope you'll find it more useful and more user-friendly. Still online are key pages such as where you can file a [complaint](#) against a utility; and where you can view video of [OPC Radio Connect](#) podcasts. We're pleased to provide a new [How to Get Involved](#) page which links you to DC elected officials and where you can send comments to regulatory agencies. In

addition, the [climate advocacy](#) page has more information about how OPC is working to combat climate change.

Indeed, we want to hear your thoughts about our new online look. Send your feedback on the new website via [Ask the Office of the People's Counsel](#), right in the middle of the home page. I look forward to your comments.

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## **It's Electric! Money for Electric Vehicle Chargers Coming to the District**



On September 27, 2022, the Biden Administration announced it has approved electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure deployment plans for the District of Columbia and states ahead of schedule under the U.S. Department of Transportation's [National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Formula Program](#). This program to build a nationwide EV charging network is funded through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. What does this mean for the District? The DC Department of Transportation (DDOT) says the city will receive \$16.6 million in funding over the next five years to build EV chargers and related equipment conveniently accessible to all eight wards, with \$2.4 million available in 2022. EVs are an important part of addressing climate change because they create far less pollution. This is also good news for motorists who are planning to buy a new vehicle but first want to be assured there is a reliable charging network before they will consider going electric.

The District's approved [Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Deployment Plan](#) includes upgrading existing EV charging infrastructure along designated "Alternative Fuel Corridors," such as New York Avenue and the I-295/Anacostia Freeway. The plan also identifies potential locations to build fast charging stations capable of recharging an EV battery to 80% in 15 to 45 minutes.

DDOT says it will award funding to public and private entities to install, operate, and maintain EV infrastructure that is convenient, reliable, affordable, and equitable for all users. OPC will be watching this closely to make sure the plans equitably benefit consumers in all eight wards.

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## **Don't be Scared. ACT NOW! Apply for Discount & Emergency Water Assistance**

During lingering challenging times, pandemic recovery, and inflation, OPC's Water Services Division is keeping DC Water consumers abreast of



aid programs to help them pay the water bill. Follow the links below:

### **DC Department of Energy and Environment: Apply for Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge (CRIAC) Assistance**

- Online [CRIAC Residential Relief Application](#)
- Email your application and documentation to [waterassistance@dc.gov](mailto:waterassistance@dc.gov)
- Mail your application to DOEE, Attn: CRIAC Residential Relief Program - 1200 First Street NE, 5th Floor, Washington, DC 20002
- **Questions?** Call (202) 350-9649 or email [waterassistance@dc.gov](mailto:waterassistance@dc.gov)

### **Provide pictures or scans of the following required documents:**

- Recent proof of income for everyone in your household (pay stub, Social Security statement, proof of termination or unemployment)
- Government-issued, photo ID (driver's license, passport)
- Social Security cards for everyone in your home
- Recent DC Water bill. \* If the bill is not in a household member's name, you must include proof of property ownership or a lease agreement indicating who pays for water charges
- A complete and signed CRIAC Residential Relief Application

**Find DC Water Customer Assistance Programs [here](#).**

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## **DC Attorney General Sues Chemical Firm Accused of Polluting Rivers and Harming DC Residents**



It's a cliché but “water is life.” And life is threatened when water is polluted. OPC's Water Services Division wants you to know about an effort to protect the quality of life of Washingtonians and local waterways. The Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia is suing Velsicol, a major chemical manufacturer, for alleged intentional contamination of the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers with cancer-causing chemicals.

According to Attorney General Karl Racine, from 1945 to 1988, Velsicol was the only manufacturer of chlordane, a pesticide used to kill insects. The lawsuit alleges the toxins continue to have a disproportionate negative effect on the health of low-income Black and Brown residents of the District.

By 1959, Velsicol knew that chlordane caused cancer, according to the lawsuit. AG Racine says senior Velsicol executives were indicted and paid a criminal fine. Nonetheless, Velsicol allegedly kept selling the pesticide and releasing it into our rivers. Addressing Velsicol's violation of DC environmental laws has cost, and will continue to cost, District taxpayers tens of millions of dollars, says OAG.



The Attorney General was joined by DC representatives of the NAACP, Sierra Club, Groundwork Anacostia River DC, and other environmental justice activists in announcing the lawsuit on October 13. Learn more [here](#).

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## The Intern Connection

### Meet OPC Intern Penny Peña: Running a Race to Help Save the Environment



OPC is fortunate to have talented law students take advantage of internship opportunities with our agency. Penny Peña is one of two legal interns who joined OPC in September for a three-month program.

A second-year student at the American University Washington College of Law, Penny is providing research and legal support to OPC attorneys on various projects. For example, she is assisting OPC's environmental and climate attorney in researching microgrid regulations.

Penny comes to OPC with an interest in environmental protection and the intersection of advocacy, renewable energy, and equity. She states, "I aim to pursue a career in clean energy with the hope of making a positive impact on historically marginalized communities, to ensure they have equal access to a healthy environment."

Penny was born in Houston, Texas and also lived in Tacoma, Washington and abroad in Madrid, Spain. When she takes a break from her law studies, Penny enjoys hiking and long-distance running. She has competed in half marathons and also was competitive figure skater for 10 years.

We believe Penny will have no problem "running circles" around anyone on the opposite side of her legal endeavors. OPC applauds her career goals in support of underserved communities and clean energy initiatives and is confident her work will contribute to OPC's service on behalf of DC consumers.

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## OPC Connecting at the PSC



**PUBLIC SERVICE  
COMMISSION**

# OPC is Advocating for Consumers in the Following Cases:

## **Formal Case No. 1167: Implementation of Electric and Natural Gas Climate Change Proposals**

On September 16, OPC filed Reply Comments in this matter.

On September 27, OPC filed the Initial Brief Addressing Legal Authority to Order Electrification.

On October 3, OPC Filed Reply Comments on WGL and AltaGas's Combined Filings.

On October 11, OPC Filed a Response to Pepco's Motion to Strike Portions of OPC's Reply Comments.

## **Formal Case No. 1160: Development of Metrics for Electric Company and Gas Company Energy Efficiency and Demand Response Programs Pursuant to Section 201 (b) of the Clean Energy DC Omnibus Amendment Act of 2018**

On September 19, OPC filed a Response to Pepco's Application for Reconsideration and Clarification and DOEE Motion for Limited Clarification.

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## OPC In Your Neighborhood!

OPC looks forward to seeing you in-person. We welcome the opportunity to speak at your Advisory Neighborhood Commission, civic association or community group meeting onsite or virtually. We can give updates on utility issues, trends, and outline how we serve. Call (202) 727-3071 if your group would like our staff to make a presentation onsite or "Zoom in." Contact the organizations listed below if you would like links to attend the meetings we'll be visiting virtually.

ANC 7D Meeting  
Tuesday, November 8, 2022  
6:30 pm - 7:30 pm  
Virtual

ANC 7E Meeting  
Tuesday, November 8  
7:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
Virtual

ANC 7C Meeting  
Thursday, November 10  
7:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
Virtual

ANC 7B Meeting  
Thursday, November 17  
6:30 pm - 7:30 pm  
Virtual

Feast of Sharing  
Wednesday, November 23  
10:00 am - 1:00 pm  
Walter E. Washington Convention Center  
801 Mount Vernon Place NW

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## Photo Gallery



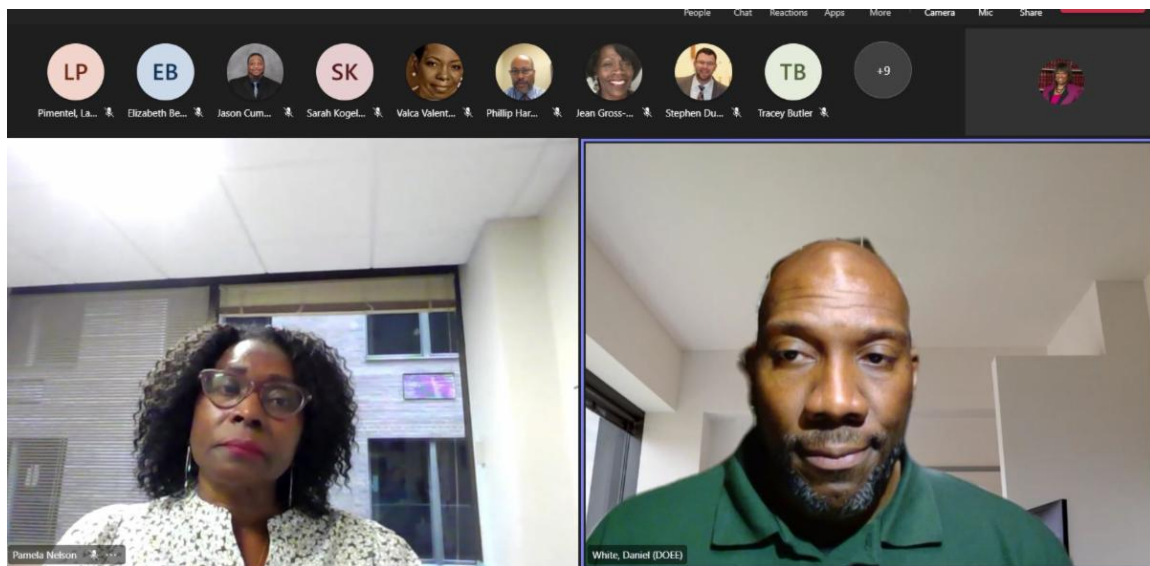


OPC “purple power” bags come in handy as walkers, including People’s Counsel Sandra Mattavous-Frye and OPC outreach staff in pink, participate in the Breast Cancer Awareness Month Walk/Run and Resource Fair sponsored by Zeta Phi Beta Sorority-Omicron Phi Zeta Chapter & The New Macedonia Baptist Church.





Seniors line up for information and give aways at OPC's table at the Senior Jubilee hosted by Ward 4 Councilmember Janeese Lewis George at Fort Stevens Recreation Center in Northwest.



OPC's Pamela Nelson moderates a webinar as Daniel White of the Department of Energy & Environment gives OPC staff an update on DOEE's Solar for All program.





OPC's Linda Jefferson and Cheryl Morse answer questions at Joint Utility Day at the DC Armory about benefit programs that offer assistance to prevent disconnections.



OPC's Jason Starks give a thumbs up for ways consumers can save energy and money on utility bills at National Energy Efficiency Day at the Southwest Public Library.

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## **Connect With OPC!**

Do you have feedback or an idea for an article that could be featured in an upcoming edition of the OPC Connection? We want to hear from you! Just drop our editorial team an email @ [info@opc-dc.gov](mailto:info@opc-dc.gov) or tweet us [@DCOPC](https://twitter.com/DCOPC).

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